

# Measuring Group Inequality Across Developing Countries

Samuel Kofi Tetteh-Baah, Kenneth Harttgen, Isabel Gunether

## Introduction

Inequalities between groups based on gender, ethnicity, religion, location, or citizenship status, among other social factors, are associated with political violence, instability and economic inefficiency in developing countries.

### Examples

- Ivory Coast: Civil wars in along ethno-religious lines
- The Philippines: Muslim/Christian conflicts
- Nepal: Maoist insurgency based on the caste system
- South Africa: Xenophobic attacks on African migrants

Group inequality gives an indication of how opportunities are distributed between social groups within a country, thus a measure of inequality of opportunity.

In spite of the importance of group inequalities, there are relatively a few empirical studies on the subject in developing countries due to data limitations.

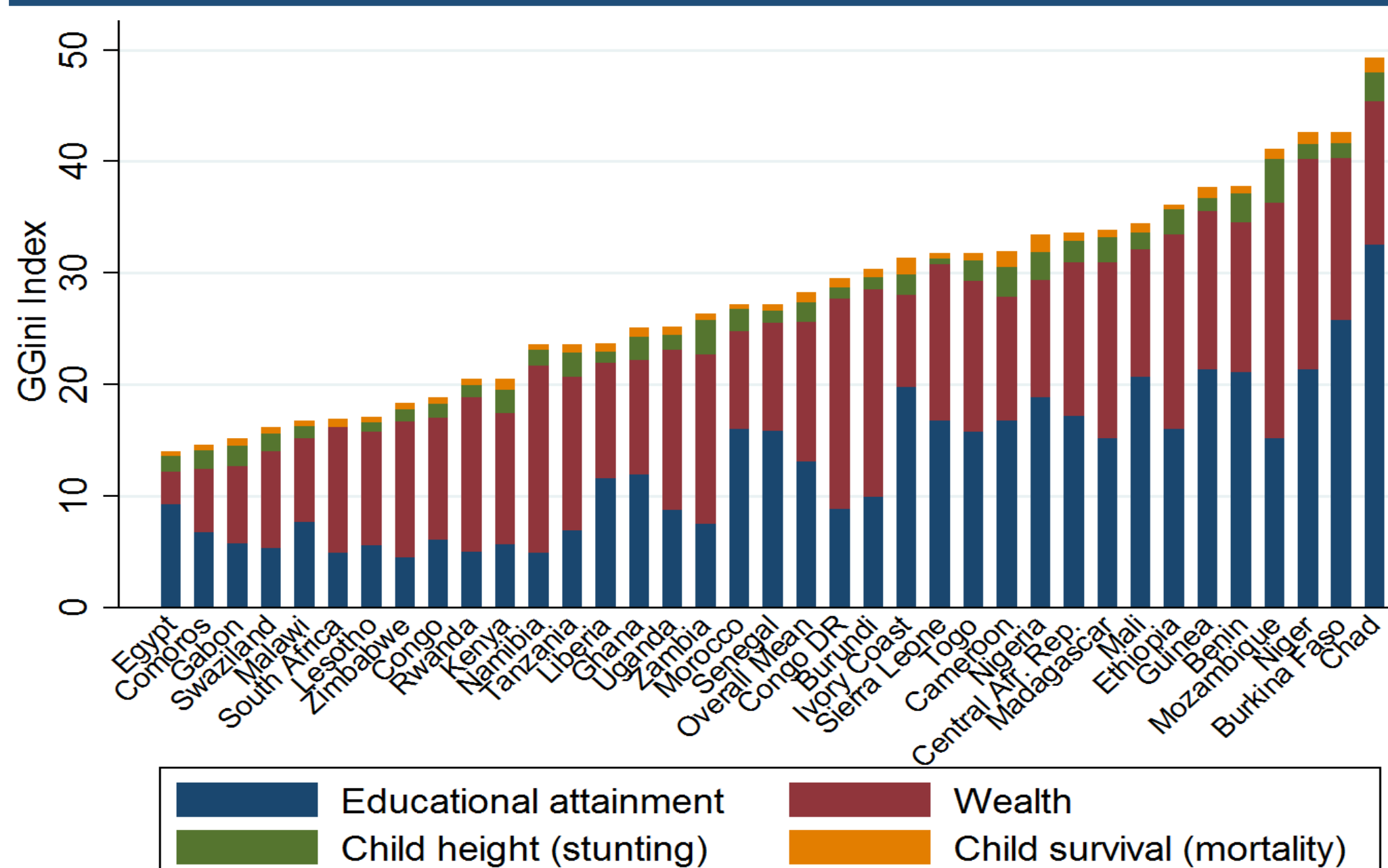
## Research Question

What is the level as well as the trend of inequality between different social groups across developing countries?

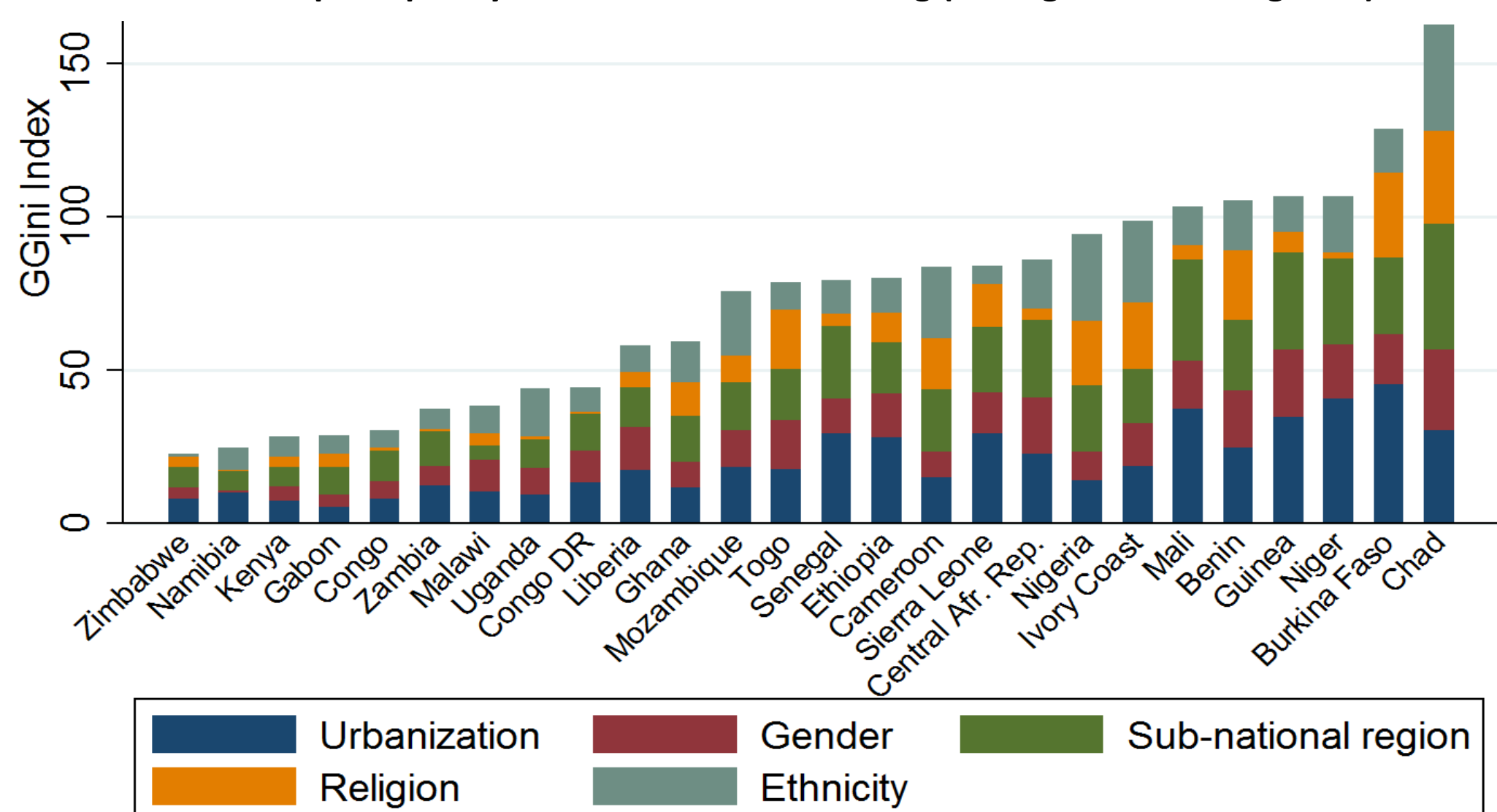
## Data and Methodology

- Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) dataset, 36 African countries between 1990 and 2015
- Four indicators of well-being: educational attainment, wealth, child height (stunting) and child survival (mortality)
- Group inequality calculated by these categories: urbanization, sub-national region, gender, religion, ethnicity
- The Group-weighted Gini Index (GGini) applied on group mean outcomes per country per survey year

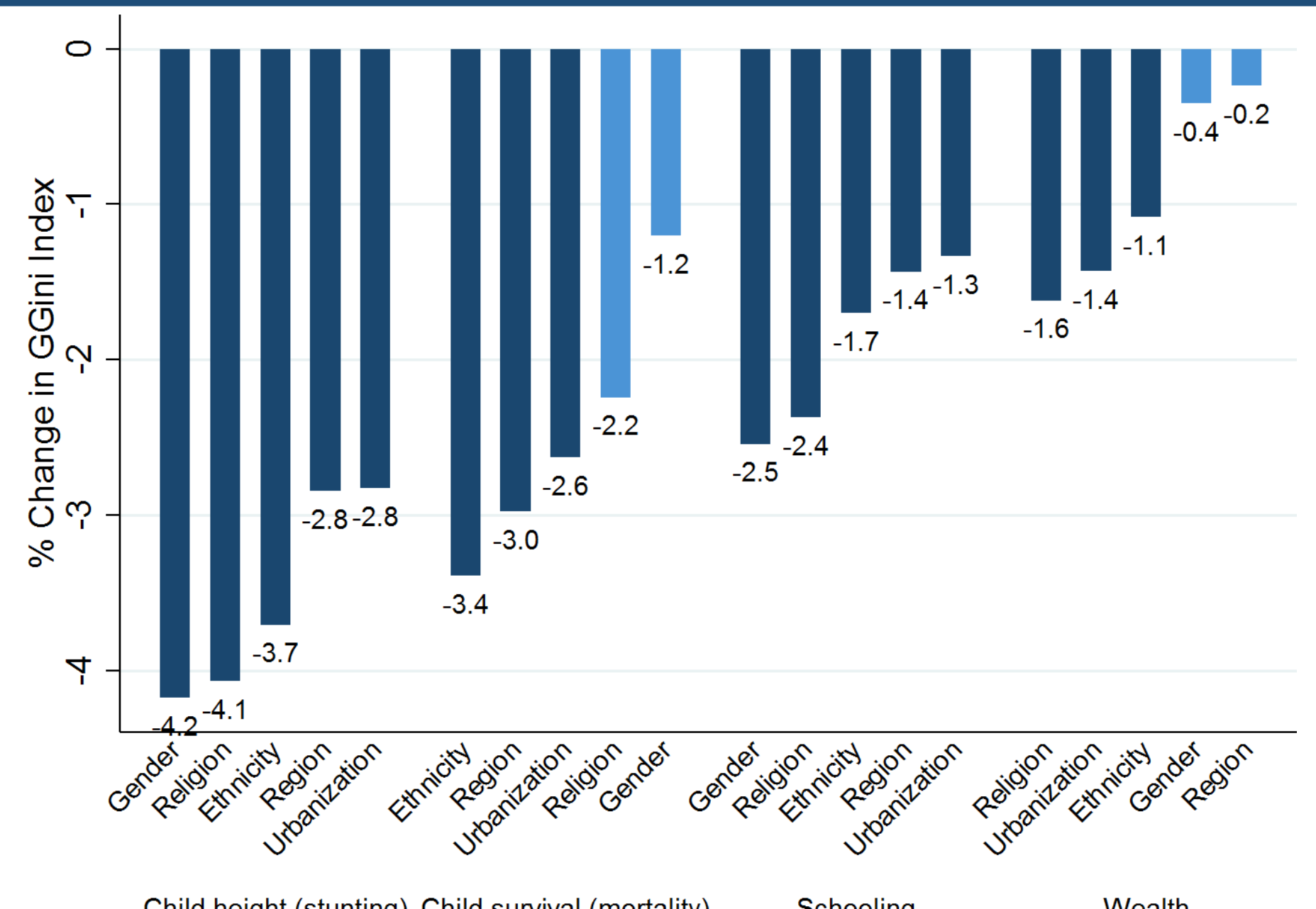
## Preliminary Results



Group inequality in indicators of well-being (averaged over categories)

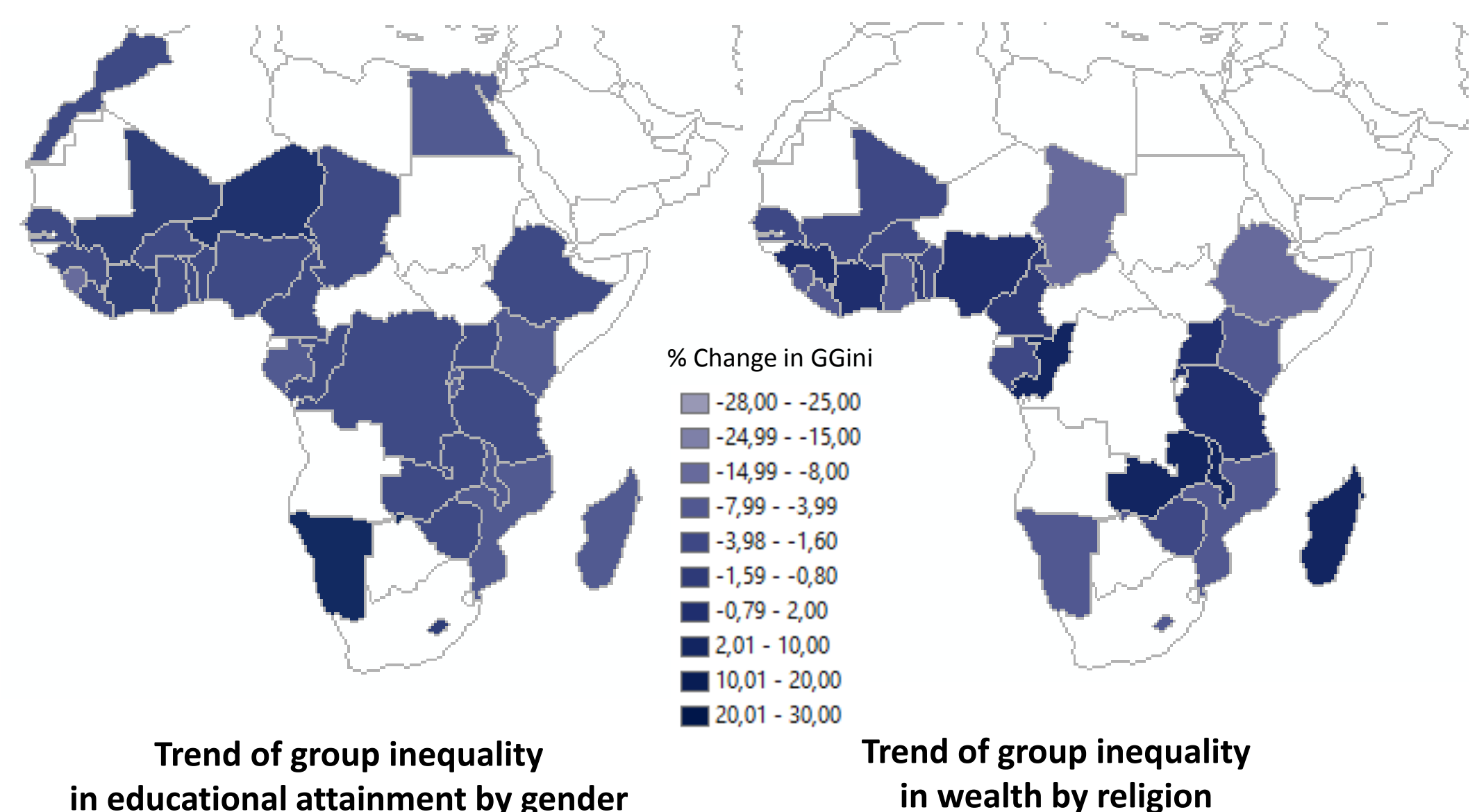


Group inequality in educational attainment by category



Trend of group inequality in indicators of well-being by category

Notes: 1) The bars represent the average annual change in group inequality between 1990 and 2015. 2) Bars in the darker color are statistically significant point estimates; bars in the light color are not.



## Conclusion

- Group inequality highest in wealth, followed by educational attainment, child height (stunting), and child survival (mortality)
- Spatial inequality highest, followed by ethnic inequality, gender inequality and religious inequality
- Fair consistency in country rankings in terms of indicators of well-being and categories
- Falling trend of group inequalities between 1990 and 2015, yet persistent inequalities in wealth
- Spatial inequality the most pronounced form of group inequality, and also the most persistent over time